

Speaking for Our Selves

A Newsletter, By, For, And About People With Multiple Personalities

Volume I, No. 4

June 1986

S4OS

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The purpose of this newsletter is to give people with multiple personalities a written forum for learning from each other about their experiences and to educate helping professionals about the diversity and range of experiences of people who have multiple personalities.

It is especially important, as professionals form groups and organizations, to learn and teach each other about treating people with multiple personalities. And it is vital that people with multiple personalities have our own forum to present our view of our experiences, fears, dreams, and hopes -- to SPEAK FOR OUR SELVES.

All articles, poems, and other material in this newsletter have been written by people with Multiple Personality Disorder unless otherwise indicated. Material from non-multiples is occasionally accepted and/or requested. Authors are identified by first name and/or initial. All material not specifically identified with an author name was written by the Editor.

NON PROFIT STATUS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WE are happy to announce that we have been granted our Federal Non Profit Status by the Internal Revenue Service! This means that you may make donations to S4OS and count them as income tax deductions. So for all of you who have written to tell us that you will make donations when we have our tax deductible status, here is your chance to make your contributions.

SUBSCRIPTION UPDATE

We have received 350 subscriptions to S4OS as of the last of May 1986. Of these, 189 are from multiples, 102 from therapists, and 58 from other individuals.

A NOTE OF CAUTION: ESPECIALLY FOR PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

The material in this newsletter may be controversial, sensitive, triggering, or emotionally overwhelming to some people/parts/personalities at some time. You might want to read this newsletter when you are feeling strong and/or grown up. And you may even wish to wait to read it at a time when supports are available to talk with about the material.

THE INSIDE STORY

POETRY

- "Because" by S. Jeremy
- "Splitting of the Mind" by Anna L.
- "Poem" by Joe but inspired by mother
- "Of Two Elements" by CW of Bonnie
- "Reality is Confusion" by KSP
- "Our Poem, Our Way" by Bogle and Scarlet
- "Far Away I See A Girl Screaming" by Rachel A.
- "The Self That I know" by Cafe D'Air/Sai De Adw
- A Collection of Poems by Ann H.
- "Dreams that Die in the Night" by Vera

RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS

- from Brian - from "me"
- from Carol R. - from MM George
- from Lisa Ann - from Peggy, et al.
- from Judy, the little Judy, The Kid, TW

REFLECTIONS FROM READERS

- "Would you believe . . ." by E.B, BA, et al.
- Discovering my Multiples, my Therapist and Courage by Cafe D'Air
- Reflections by Missy
- "I have been integrated . . ." by LA
- "Today I actually remember . . ." by New Chris

ARTWORK

- Multiply Pleasing Diversity by Susan T.
- Artwork/Cartoons and Poem by M.M. George

QUESTION AND ANSWER COLUMNS

- How do non multiples best live with and get along with multiples? How do multiples desire to be treated - with open acknowledgment of their selves, recognition of them?
- What is your experience in starting or participating in self-help groups for multiples? Do you think we should list self-help groups for multiples? Should there be any screening of what groups we list? Should we list groups run by therapists?
- Question about developing a special inpatient psychiatric unit for multiples: How should this unit be designed? Space needs? Types of groups to be offered? Types of treatment to be offered? What would be most helpful to multiples receiving short or long term treatment on this unit?

COLUMNS

- Believe It Or Not by Mary
- Joke Column by MBK
- For Your Information
- Editor's Reflections
- Appreciation Column

READER INFORMATION

- Notes for Subscribers
- Self-Help Groups
- Organization Update
- Board Member Profile: Cyndi B.
- Copyright Clarification
- Survey of Subscribers
- Grantwriters and Funding Sources Wanted
- The September 1986 Issue: The Children Inside Us and the Children In Our Lives

NOTES FOR SUBSCRIBERS**Change of address**

Please notify us of any change of address. Many of you have done this already. This is especially important because S4OS is mailed bulk mail which is neither forwarded nor returned to us if your address is changed.

Personal Correspondence

Many of you write personal letters requesting information or assistance in a variety of matters. It takes a long time for us to answer these requests because we want to be thoughtful and careful with our responses. We are not able at the present time to assist readers in the following areas: finding a therapist, sending literature on MPD, or individually connecting you with pen pals who are multiples.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The basic guidelines and policies for submitting material to S4OS are detailed in both the October 1985 and the December 1985 issues.

LEVELS OF EDITING

As we indicated in our submission guidelines, we have handled the editing of your material on one of three levels: A = no editing; B = minor editing; and C = cooperative editing. For people who did not indicate what level of editing they preferred, we have treated it as level A. The level of editing is indicated in parentheses with each submission. Level of editing shown is the level of editing requested by the author. In most cases, no editing was actually required, even for those submissions indicating levels B and C.

STAFF BOX

Speaking For Our Selves is a publication of the California Non-profit Public Benefit Corporation, SPEAKING FOR OUR SELVES, INC. It is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December. The deadline for submitting material is the first of the month preceding publication.

The Editorial Advisory Committee for this issue is Dena R., Cyndi B., Linda P., JoAnne R., Jaimee K., Barbara P., and P.D. & Co. We are all individuals diagnosed and in treatment for MPD.

All correspondence should be addressed to S4OS, P. O. Box 4830, Long Beach, CA 90804.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

I became close with a psychiatric nurse in a private psych. hospital. This nurse was from Nigeria. It seemed all of a sudden she wouldn't come near me. I found out from another staff person she saw me split and believed I was possessed and evil.
Mary (Edit level B)

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SELF-HELP GROUPS

We have received various views from you readers about the issue of listing self-help groups for multiples in this newsletter. (See the Question and Answer section.) We have also consulted an attorney about our legal liability if we list groups. And we--the Board of S4OS--have struggled to decide on a policy statement, with differences among and within us.

At the present time, self-help groups for multiples will not be listed in S4OS. The Board of S4OS will continue to sort out the legality and feasibility of listing self-help groups. There will be an ongoing review of this policy over the next six months. Jaimee K. will be responsible for researching and presenting this information to the Board.

There are several reasons for this policy.

1. We would not want to list groups without screening them first. But at the present time we do not have staff to set the criteria to select, screen, and monitor the groups.
2. This is especially true when you consider the potential number of groups to screen--based on the total number of subscribers and specific requests for help in this area--we would estimate between 10-15 individuals would want to list groups. And this number would be expected to increase as the numbers of subscribers increase.
3. Even if we included a disclaimer of responsibility for what happens at these groups, we still might be drawn into a lawsuit if these groups "damaged" someone who attended.
4. Our goal of producing a quality newsletter (available to multiples and their helpers) throughout the country takes up all our staff time and needs to be our top priority. Until we have stabilized our staffing and production of this newsletter, it is not organizationally wise to branch into other ventures.

BECAUSE by S. Jeremy '86 (edit level A)

Well, I've gotta buy some time
because I'm fallin' out of line.
And tho' I know it is a crime . . .
I feel like I want to die.
I'm so tired of this place.
It's like arsenic and old lace.
I just can't seem to keep the pace.
And I really don't know-why?

I have listened to them scream--
like I have when in a dream
And tho' it's not what it might seem . . .
It is really just the same.
Cuz, it's like you're right back there
where nobody seems to care.
And you know life isn't fair.
To stay alive you play a game.

So, you make up all new rules
to dumbfound the other fools
who made you eat the stools
you had to consume each day.
And with what's left of your pride
you create a world inside--
that reality's denied . . .
But, you've found a brand new way.

Then you grow and you grow
out of touch with those you show
them the life/the hell you know.
But, it doesn't bother them.
Because they're lost in their drinks.
With their heads in dirty sinks.
And you remember how it stinks.
But, you're too young to condemn.

You can battle and can fight.
You can labor with your might.
But, they'll get you in the night.
And you know they're gonna come.
So you try to stay awake.
Cuz you know what lies in stake.
No matter what . . . you're gonna take
another beating 'till they're done.

Then while you cry and you weep--
There's this vigil that you keep.
All in hopes they'll fall asleep . . .
You wonder how you're going to cope?
And still crying and still weeping . . .
In a constant vigil keeping.
You know that they are sleeping . . .
But, you're dangling from a rope.

So, with your active mind
you search inside until you find
someone new--who is so blind . . .
They don't know what's taken place.
And you give them a new name.
Because it's all part of the game--
To keep yourself from goin' insane
you create a different face.

But, you're still growing and still growing
And the battle scars are showing.
It goes on without you knowing.
And you cannot figure-why?
That you keep yourself alive
just to take another dive--
that you manage to survive . . .
And you cannot even cry.

Soon you find you're out there fielding
all the pain that you've been shielding
from the people who are yielding
in yourself to play the game.
And tho' you might not understand . . .
You'll find the game gets out of hand.
Although it wasn't in the plan . . .
You will never be the same.

Cuz each player in the whole
learns its' individual role.
And their decisions take their toll.
God, you feel you're goin' to pop it!
Because it doesn't seem to matter . . .
If you're thin-now you are fatter.
And you all think you will splatter-
because none of "you" can stop it.

You are driven to the brink
where you throw up in the sink.
Next, you're driven to a shrink
who says, "Everything's okay".
Then you're labeled as a nut.
So you want to punch their gut.
But, you want out of this rut . . .
So you listen to their say.

You stagger. But, you fight
to be relieved of your own plight.
And you often loose the sight
that this person is your friend.
Because of what you all went through
was impossible to do.
But they want now, "all of you"
to go through it once again.

Although you often scream and shout
because everyone wants out.
Now you're filled with bitter doubt . . .
Cuz you can't take another fall.
And you want to let them know.
But, you are all afraid to go
back where the battle scars now show.
Can we ever face it all?

Because we think we are a quirk
we wonder; Can it really work?
Should we listen to our Jerk--
who acts as tho' a wiz?
Do they really understand
how it all got out of hand?
That it wasn't in our plan
but, now, this is how it is?

You feel ugly and the shame.
Cuz you've taken all the blame
enough so, you forget your name . . .
Filling you with further doubt . . ?
You wonder . . if they really do
understand what you've been through-
Why do they ask it, still, from you
to go back to work it out?

So, you stagger, but, you fight
to be relieved of your own plight.
And you often loose the sight
why you're back there once again.
Because now, what you go through
is impossible to do.
But you're learning about you--
So, consider them your friend.

For maybe soon/one day
you "all" will see your way.
And be able just to stay
whatever you've become.
You'll learn-you're not so odd
because of different paths you've trod.
There is still one/single God
and no further need to run.

RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS

The material on the next two pages consists of letters to S4OS that are actually responses to material previously published in S4OS. Since readers can't correspond directly with each other we will use a section of the paper to allow dialog between readers. This is especially important for the two responses to Jeanette because her letter to us did not include her full name or return address. Hope she reads this and finds it helpful.

Dear S4OS:

This is in response to the letter from Jennette in your March issue. Although I am not a multiple (my dearest friend is), Jennette and I have something in common - I too was raped by a man that I knew. Unlike Jennette, I did not have the strength or courage to report the rape to the police. It is unfortunate (but, sadly, not unusual) that Jennette had to deal with a police officer who was uncaring and misinformed.

Although you stated that S4OS was not trying to address the legal issues raised in the letter, as someone who works within the legal profession (I am a legal assistant), and as citizen who believes in our legal system (I served on a jury and I know that it can work), I am distressed by the idea that multiples may now believe that they have no legal rights. THIS IS NOT TRUE.

I spoke with one of the lawyers in the firm, and he confirmed what I thought - a case would not be thrown out of court simply because either the plaintiff or the defendant had a mental disorder.

Certainly, an attorney might refuse to represent someone with MPD, or might advise against initiating a legal proceeding. The case in question presents a double difficulty Jennette has MPD and she knew the man who raped her. Acquaintance rape is still viewed with skepticism by all too many people.

I can appreciate that many people with MPD have had difficulties with the legal system. But if those who work with multiples can be narrowminded (I refer you to the entries in the Believe It Or Not column), what can we (realistically) expect when dealing with other, non-mental health professionals?

Finding a lawyer who can help you may be as difficult as finding a therapist who can help you. But your rights, like your health, are worth it.

Carol R. (Edit level A)

Dear Rachel & Others,

This is a response to the person who was raped and couldn't get help. In 1982, Kris was raped by a policeman. He was reported and investigated for a year by I.A.D. (police). They found out about all of us and asked how she could be sure it really happened.

We do have legal rights, we just have to stand up for it, let other people know that we know our rights. And we have to know for ourselves what they are. It makes me mad that he got away with that (but that's my job) 'cause I know he could get away with it because of "insanity, but now Billy M. still has problems legally because of what one of his people did. I hope you have support, you have ours anyway.

Brian (13 yrs old) (Edit level C)

Reflections on Multiples Living Together (written by 3 personalities within one individual)
By Lisa Ann (Edit level C)

1. We lived with another multiple for two months. We knew each other from a hospitalization. At the apartment we had separate bedrooms and that gave us space. Some of us became more concerned about the other person and left the rest of us without that inner caring. Another reason for moving on was we hadn't been on our own for over three years (half-way houses, friends, hospitals). Finally both of our groups were becoming dependent in taking responsibility for each other in alerting our therapist what was going on. We had the same therapist. In the hospital setting we were in a locked room and our contact with them was limited and when we met it was special.
Emily
2. The folks with the same outer behavior--drinking, eating disorders, partiers, balanced folks all got along. One of the really good things was the kids from both groups got to play with kids from their own age.
Cassie
3. There has to be guidelines set up and yet an openness for multiples to live together. Also a willingness to accept what is going on with each other and understand not everyone will like everyone. It's great in the sense of support that can be at times. Only multiples understand multiples.

continued RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS

Dear Rachel and S40S friends:

Thank you to all those who wrote in response to my letter in the December issue. I appreciate very much your reaching out to support a stranger.

Rachel, you asked for feedback on the idea of people being able to use the newsletter as a way of reaching others like I needed to. Yes, if you and others have the time to do the forwarding and S40S can support the cost of forwarding, I think this is a useful function of the newsletter. No matter what responses I would have gotten, it was good to know that there was a way to communicate, to not feel so isolated.

Thank you again, Me

Dear Rachel A. and all members of S40S.

I've been crying my eyes out! You all have done so much to help other multiples come out and to realize they are not alone. I knew that when you sent my originals back from Kem's drawings the ones you'd consider printing in our newsletter. I was excitedly surprised to recognize Pat's writing and then stunned to finally read the Editor's note and Agy, Dusty and Kem's brief letters. I cried my eyes out. I laughed and cried because I missed them and seeing what they had written to you just took me over . . .

I really sensed that you all would have difficulty because I imagine all 107 multiple subscribers were as desperate as me to send in information and receive your newsletter. Under-

standing our limits is hard to learn. That's the main reason I had to take a leave of absence from my sorority. But if you all can continue the newsletter, be it bi-monthly, quarterly or once a year then I can slow down and not push myself in the Chapter as well.

This letter is mainly just to let you all know that I understand and please take it easy. Thank you for sticking in there.

Peggy et al.

Dear S40S,

I would like to say thank you to Michael/ Catherine for their poem in the Dec. '85 issue of the newsletter.

As I read it I recognized my own guardian - the Kid - for the first time. She had watched over me, as well as a six-year old little Judy and protected us both; she had built a concrete block house in the cellar to hold the darkness, fear and loneliness.

Since that day, a door to the blockhouse has opened and The Woman held inside has come out to speak.

Thank you, Michael, for your poem, and thank you Catherine for sharing with us - you have both helped all of us to take the first steps toward integration and wholeness.

Our love to you both.

Judy, Little Judy
The Kid
The Woman
(Edit Level A)

Dear S40S:

I just recently received the second and third issues of S40S and, after reading through both of them (Dec. and Mar.), I felt a need to respond to several articles, letters, etc. First off, though, I would like to express my appreciation at having a multiple newsletter being made available to those of us in need.

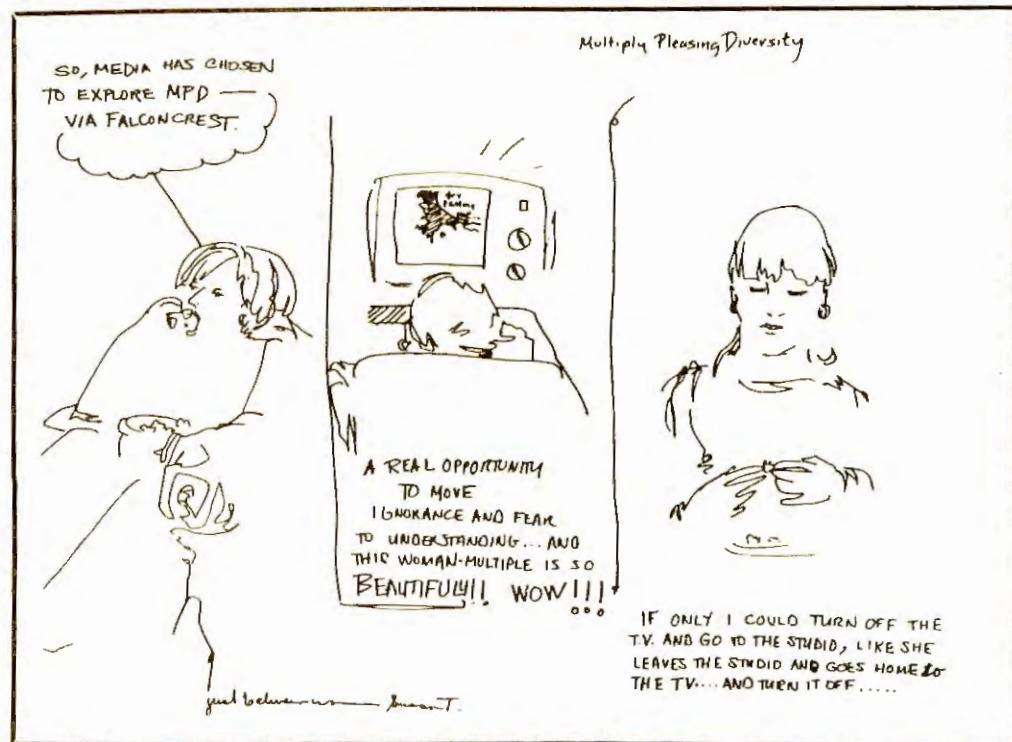
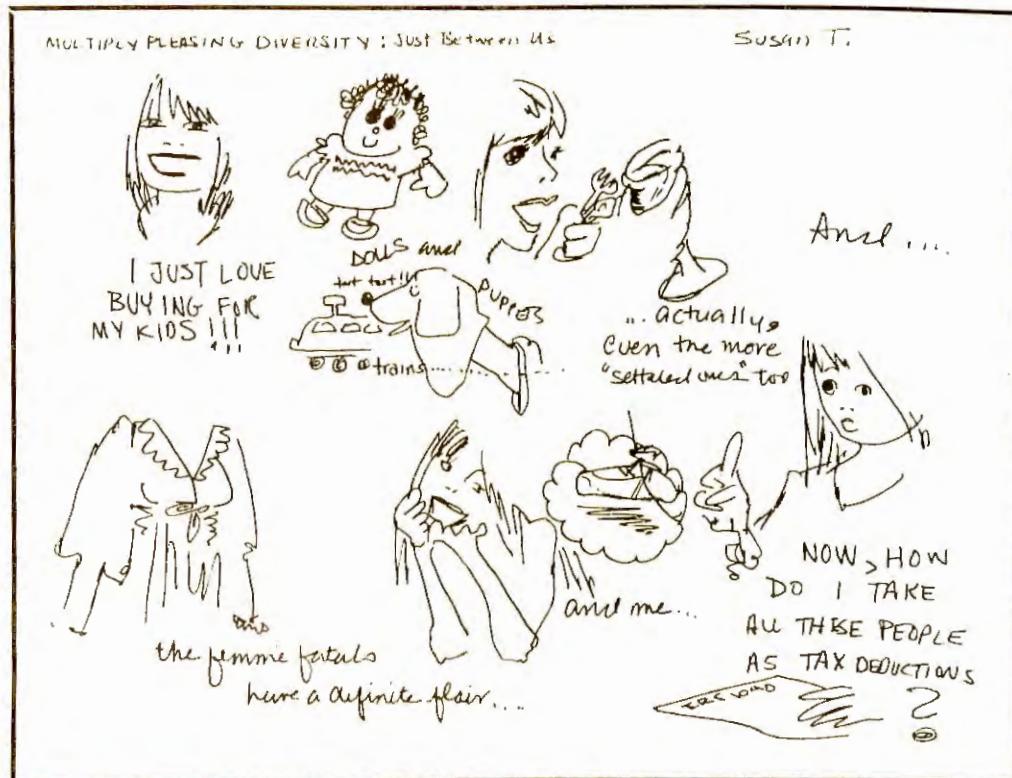
My first response will go to "Chris" who wrote a letter in the Dec. issue. She said everyone has a core personality because all the core personality is, is the individual who was "born" to the body. Even if that person disappeared at two months of age, she or he is still there . . . somewhere! I can say that for a fact because, in my own life, I was "asleep" for 28 years! At the age of six, when my major trauma occurred, I simply couldn't accept what was happening to me and I escaped into an oblivion for 28 years. My protector, George, never even let on that I had ever been there, in order to keep the "secret". Twenty-eight years later, I suddenly re-awakened after several years of therapy. I was still six years old and had to be "aged" through hypnosis, to match the body. You may not know where the core is, but she is there somewhere. And someday, God willing, you will find her again, because, without her, your cure will never be quite complete.

I make my second response to that part of "Catherine" who is named Michael and who wrote the poem in the same issue. If I didn't know any better, I would have thought my protector, George, had written it, right down to the line, "I stood watch for you for 28 years." The only one of my personalities left now is my protector. George, I am sure, has had the same feelings that Michael is having...feeling that they want to get rid of him. After several years of trying to integrate George, I finally came to the realization that maybe I don't really want to get rid of him. After all, he saved me from my hell and carried me through my life when I didn't even know that life existed . . . I was in limbo. But once I woke up and realized what he had done for me, I was grateful. I don't want to send him away. He seldom comes out unless I really need him, and I guess that is what I am grateful for . . . that he is there for me when I need him. According to my therapist, as long as there is complete cooperation between us and a co-consciousness (which is something fairly new to us), then he sees no desperate need for me to integrate George at this time. I don't think I could ever find a way to thank George for all that he did for me in all those years, but I think Michael's poem gives me some clues as to what my George feels. Thank you Michael.

M.M. George (Edit Level A)

Editor's Note

The cartoons/artwork on this page are selections from a collection of eleven drawings submitted to S4OS by Susan T. In the note from Susan, she asks "If my stuff is to be presented, please advise or suggest it be discussed with their therapist for a personal perspective. All I write and draw is from my own therapy and experience. It isn't meant to be generic (for everyone)." Thank you for submitting your material. Hope you like the selections . . . it is so hard to choose!



SPLITTING OF THE MIND

TIME LOST-HOURS, DAYS, MONTHS, YEARS,
CHILDHOOD LOST -FOREVER- SO MANY TEARS.
PAIN OF THE BODY AND THE MIND
MAKES LIVING EACH DAY TOO HARD TO FIND.

WHERE ARE WE, WHERE DID WE GO
WHO IS HERE NOW, COME FORWARD AND SHOW
WHO IS IT THAT DOES THE THINGS I NORMALLY DO
LIKE GO TO SCHOOL AND TIE MY SHOE?

YES I'M SILLY, SOMETIMES SERENE;
BUT MOSTLY I'M JUST IN BETWEEN.
SO MANY IDEAS AND LIVES INSIDE.
YOU TOOK SOMEONE ELSE TO BE YOUR BRIDE.

THE FEAR, THE LOSS, THE TERROR OF NIGHT,
THEY ALL GAVE WAY TO GIVE THE MIND FLIGHT.
AMY, DANNY, KAREN, AND SAM
THE CHILDREN CAME OUT - THEY KNOW WHO I AM.

THEY CARE FOR ME TAKING AWAY THE PAIN.
THE MIND AND BODY CAN THEN MAINTAIN.
THE HELP I'VE RECEIVED FROM PEOPLE SO SMALL
IS UNBOUNDLESS IN SCOPE AND MAKES ME MY ALL.

Anna L. (Edit level A)

POEM by Joe, but inspired by Mother
(Edit level A)

The depths of darkness
surround me,
But beyond me
there is light,
In me there is life
In me the life which
God has chosen is many,
All have seen the darkness,
For out of the Light,
Even the darkness is born,
And like the light
that does shine onward
and forever upward,
So shall our Soul,
Continually seek,
the unending truth,
of Your Life.

OF TWO ELEMENTS by CW of Bonnie
(Editing Level A)

You confuse
with appearance so whole.
You are Gold; polished and hard.
I am Mercury, breaking under force,
Slipping away into droplets,
Scattered, changing
until no one can touch.
You are the ring on the finger that
people try to clutch;
the Calf, the coin,
the miner of men.
I am Poison
and, no matter what,
my uses are limited.
You look good,
yet, I fear you
the most.
the world does not understand
and chooses you.
Not seeing
I am just as essential.

REALITY IS CONFUSION by KSP (Edit level A)

Freedom to me is making a deal and still be able
to keep all of me,
You see this is what my life has been and the way
all three have to be.

I see things a little different at times but who
doesn't that's the changes of the minds,
There is a little confusion, a lot at times, but who
wouldn't in this fast world of yours and mine.

I watch and listen to all of me, because my whole
world is wrapped up into three,
To touch, feel, and maybe question all of me, because
our thoughts run together as one, than three.

No, don't tell me this isn't reality, because they
must live on inside of me,
You see this is what is real to me, I fell, I touch,
and I need all three.

In this so call world of reality, we are going to try
to live and be,
But we move as one for they must not see that we are
really three.

He tells us no, we are not three, we have one body
as he, just separate identities,
Maybe so, we say with ease, but what will happen
to us when we lose some of these identities.

You see they are my life and very real to me and
frightening to think about losing any part of me,
Take away this fear and allow me to see that by
becoming one, we still can have all three.

To be with ones thoughts and not three would be very
strange to me,
Maybe I'm just not ready to be set free and by doing
this you might take away another part of me.

Please try to be patient until I can see the way out
of this world of three,
Maybe I will get enough strength to come out and be
just me-----whatever that might be.

OUR POEM, OUR WAY by Bogie & Scarlet
personalities in the body of Mary K.
(Edit level B)

Only one body, one heart, but the minds
of many,
Any trouble or hurt we've caused can only
explain something so uncanny.
To this we have to hold on to and pray,
that others may forgive and forget on
their own loving way.
Yesterdays and todays are "ours," you see,
But someday one and the same we'll be.

Down this long, dark, scarey path we've
traveled,
in an effort and longing to get ourselves
unraveled.
Long and mighty though it seems at times,
We are on the journey into the depths of
our minds.

Trust and Acceptance do not come very easy,
But with God and the encouragement
of others, the progress is so pleasing.

QUESTION AND ANSWER (Question from a non-multiple - to multiples and non-multiples)

HOW DO NON-MULTIPLES BEST LIVE WITH AND GET ALONG WITH MULTIPLES? HOW DO MULTIPLES DESIRE TO BE TREATED - WITH OPEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THEIR SELVES, RECOGNITION OF THEM?

P.W. (Edit level C)

Pat is 6 years old, everyone talks to her as if she is 6 years old, because she Is.
Kem is 14 and how do you talk to any teenager . . . on their level.
Kiddle cannot speak but occasionally does sign language to communicate. Pat taught her sign language!
Just as you talk to any person at any age you talk to them on their level.
By the time you get to know each personality's characteristics, you will recognize them in seconds, (in some cases).
Other personalities that seem so much alike, all you need to do is simply ask "Pat? Is that you?"
Acknowledgment of them is also showing them your acceptance of them as all people need to be accepted.
Multiple or non-multiple people need to be accepted.

Gayle (Edit level B)

How to treat a multiple? With the utmost consideration and dignity as you would any human, relating to who is there at any given time. I prefer that I/we not be called by separate names. If more than one of me is nearby, I would like the others to receive the benefits of the relationship also. No confrontation or analysis, please unless requested by me.
I have kept my diagnosis to myself. Fears have kept me "closeted." I have been both benefitted and hurt by this decision. The benefit is in being treated normally.

Jessica (Edit level C)

I think this should be two different questions, depending on if the non-multiple is an adult or a child.

After the multiplicity came out in our therapy, we had a long debate about whether or not to tell our children. Our therapist felt that they would be better off not knowing, but they were becoming increasingly frightened by the things Mommy couldn't explain - why we smoked a pipe, why we had dolls, etc. What was the awful secret? When they were told, it was soon (not immediately) no longer awful. One of the things we did when we told them was to let them "meet" alters that have helped raise them ("I am the one who took you to the park." "I am the one who bakes cookies"), so that they were not left feeling that Mommy had suddenly changed. They go through spells of wanting to know who is up, and spells of not asking.

With non-multiple adults, I think the multiple should have the say in how they are treated, but children are different.

Dear Rachel and Staff:

When I met my girlfriend, I knew only that I was deeply drawn to her for her brilliance, the diversity of her gifts, her depth of thought, and yes, her complexity. She warned me that she was subject to periodic withdrawals from the world and that there were things about her which she could not then tell me, but within a couple months of my persistent friendship, I evidently passed some unspoken test with her, and she revealed her Secret to be MPD. Knowing this explained so much even as it raised other questions of an almost imponderable nature

The point I want to make is that her sharing with me to the fullest extent possible the truth about her situation as a multiple has created a new trust which has drawn me ever deeper to her. Finally I begin to understand some otherwise puzzling aspects of her behavior, and with that insight--and the trust that made it possible--I feel needed and useful in a way I've never experienced before. Not everybody in her arena loves me, but now at least I know enough to be understanding.

While it's almost beyond comprehension how any two people manage to share an intimacy without a high degree of psychological awareness, it seems especially important for a non-multiple who is involved with a multiple. Having been in therapy (as I have been) strikes me as a particularly valuable asset for non-multiples.

But it's all still so new to me! While I've learned a little about MPD from my girlfriend, I am eager to learn everything I can about it. I was very happy to be introduced thus to this brave and fascinating newsletter. I'm enclosing a check for my subscription (please send me the first, complimentary issue as well)--along with my thanks for producing such a valuable resource.

Sincerely yours, Eric N.

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE IN STARTING OR PARTICIPATING IN SELF-HELP GROUPS FOR MULTIPLES? DO YOU THINK THIS PAPER SHOULD LIST SELF-HELP GROUPS FOR MULTIPLES? SHOULD THERE BE ANY SCREENING OF WHAT GROUPS WE LIST? SHOULD WE LIST GROUPS RUN BY THERAPISTS?

Linda (Edit level C)

If they have been screened, I think S4OS should list groups. I realize this would be yet another added strain on the staff but maybe some reliable therapist could offer a help in screening. I know of no such groups in my area but if there was I'd ask my therapist to check it out and I know she would. Confidentiality is so important because we live in a small town that I would not even attend unless it was screened.

Victoria (Edit level C)

I belong to a self-help group for incest survivors. I'm new in this organization, yet it has really helped me to see and know others who are survivors. I would like to start or be in a group for multiples. I don't think it needs to be run by a therapist. I don't have the money to pay for such a group. Any type of group has its draw backs. AA is not for all alcoholics at all times. The person has to be ready for it. I feel the same is for multiples. There should be some type of screening to protect ourselves from gapers wanting to see a freak show. Perhaps a note from their therapist stating they are a multiple. If there are groups run by therapists they should only be listed if multiples without money can join. Otherwise it's free publicity for the therapist to make money off of us.

P.W. (Edit level C)

Yes, I'd find out if the therapist has been successful with this type of group before. Has he or she ever done a group of multiples before?

Should we list self-help groups? If you decide yes on this issue then it would be nice to give some information on the therapist who you are listing for leaving it up to the individual multiples to check it out themselves.

And just like your repeated Note of Caution (which I hope you continue to repeat) that some of the articles may trigger certain parts/people and/or personalities.

You are not responsible if they choose to go into a self-help group and it became a problem. It may work out just fine too.

"Thou shalt not be Responsible for things thou cannot Control."

Gayle (Edit level B)

Please DO list groups, we need the contact! I am hoping to organize a group. My current plans include the following:

- (1) Develop a plan for screening applicants.
- (2) Find neutral territory - A community building room, free or cheap.
- (3) Meet with group - decide together: (a) Whether therapist leadership or self help group best serves our needs; (b) Policy on guests (therapists, friends, speakers); (c) Meeting schedule, financial needs; (d) Develop a confidentiality code; (e) Get acquainted. Allow plenty of time.
- (4) If group decides to allow guests, allow only by prior arrangement - No drop-ins.
- (5) If a therapist led group - choose a neutral therapist.

Beth Ann (Edit level C)

I have been asking my therapist for a special group for multiples, but none exist. I would like to have access to a list of self help or therapy groups.

Since so many personalities are involved, it is inevitable that different personalities in different multiples will clash. Therefore I believe that a qualified professional should be present for such problems as conflicts, flashbacks, problem solving & general information when multiples get together.

Vicki G. (Edit level C)

Can you help me? I am in hopes of finding other multiples in my area to form a self help group for support. This last year I've found two others with MPD and I want to see if anyone else would be interested. I found it helpful to actually see in person that I am not alone. I think they would too. I really don't want my address in the newsletter.

Diedre & Annabelle for PD. & Co. (Edit level C)

We are proud to announce that we and three other charter MPD members have finally begun a Multiple Personality Support Network. We do not call ourselves a self-help group, but instead a support network. For two reasons: (1) Many MPD's (and their therapists) are wary of groups. We are not a group for therapy for other multiples. (2) We want mainly to offer support - the knowledge that other multiples can know they are not alone, and offer any helpful hints we've learned the hard way on how to cope with living as a multiple.

The biggest problem is getting word out that we exist to support when able - be it through phone calls, correspondence or face-to-face visits.

We think there should be screening of what groups or networks you list in S4OS. For instance - checking to see if there is any kind of professional consultant to the group and finding out if the group has any definite goals and guidelines.

So far our experience with contacting other MP's has been very positive.

FAR AWAY I SEE A GIRL SCREAMING by Rachel A.,
the guide, Shela, the girls, and many others
(Editing level B)

my face . . . waits for the water
it is silent, the water and my face
the air is filled with terror

his hand
holds my face . . . under the water

colors . . . white, black, blue, green
it is changing in my mind
and
far away i see a girl screaming

no one hears her

my face . . . is covered with water
my eyes, my nose, my mouth, my ears, my hair

in my mind the water changes colors
or maybe the water changes colors???

his hand
holds my face . . . under the water
i am holding still
maybe I am dead?

maybe he is holding the head of a dead girl
under the water
maybe, i am alive and
my face is waiting for him to lift it out of the water

maybe he lifted it out of the water
and then put it back under the water
and i don't remember
him letting me breathe the air

maybe i am only breathing colors
the colors of the water
and the colors of my mind

my face is under the water
but somehow
far away i see a girl screaming.

his hand is holding
my face under the water
does he see the girl screaming?

can you take your hand
reach into this poem
and lift my face out of the water?

if you took my face
out of the water
what would you find?
would the girl be already dead?
or just a girl trained to hold her face under water?
or would you find the girl in the distance who is screaming?

far away can you see the girl screaming?

if you took my face
out of the water
the girl would ask you to put it back
in the water
she is a girl who stays alive
by having her face held under the water

the water changes in my mind
it is cold
it is warm
it is white
it is silver
it is black
it is red

please return my face to the water
the water is my friend

the water covers the thoughts
the water drowns the fears

once there was a girl who was screaming
now she has left the room

the water is silent
my face is still
even the air has left the room

just remember
that far away
another girl is screaming

THE SELF THAT I KNOW A Poem To Us
by CaFe D'Air & Sai De Adw
(Edit level B)

I am a kaleidoscope of personalities
A design ever changing
With colors that are as vibrant
as they are dull.

Parts of me within this design
have found fascination - their lives
caught in dead disbelief
such passion hits hard.

If only I could stop this rotation
of rampant tempest
a tenancy
clinging and tenacious
detailed in every imaginable color.

I would bring them all into focus
into a singular design
A singular personality
developed through self-love
maturing and growing
with nurturing effervescence
of ones' selves.

Respect, dignity and pride
wholeness created between
soul and mind
the spiritual
the emotional
and the physical.

Editor's Introduction to Poetry by Ann H.

Thank you, Ann H., for submitting your poetry to S4OS. It was really difficult to select these eight poems from the 38 that you sent us. We wanted to include all of them but, as you could understand, space considerations do not allow us to do that. The material really captures feelings/experiences in me and had impact on those who worked to enter/edit this material.

POETRY by Ann H.

(Edit level A)

I Called You 1-30

I called you again.
In effect you said
I am a pest.
Your words coil and spring.
Do you think I like feeling
that desperate?

I Have No Arms 11-8-85

I have no arms
To work with,
Throw with,
Hug with.
These are pawned,
I can't own.

I have no legs
To be grounded with,
Run with,
Hide with.
These are borrowed,
Never owned.

I have no mouth
to eat with,
Scream with,
Ask with.
Its loss
Keeps me alone.

I have no body
To live with,
Play with,
Love with.
This was stolen,
I pretend I own.

I have no space
To heal with,
To be with--
Just to be with.
Never was it mine alone.

What you see are
Dead illusions,
No feeling,
Hallucinations.
All was given, stolen;
I don't own.
I have no arms
but frail illusions.
What do you own?

You Ran Away 12-5-85

Mother---
You ran away,
Into alcohol, self-neglect and death

Father---

You ran away,
Into your garage, alcohol and suicide.

Brother---

You are running away,
Into hallucinations,
Endless schemes to avoid the pain.

Relatives, friends, neighbors, teachers,
priests---

You ran away,
Pretending not to see, doing nothing.

As I feel the pain
It takes to change
I almost don't begrudge
your running.
But I hate you
For me being
The first family member
Trying so hard
Not to run away.

Preoccupied 2-25
A friend said
it sounds like
I'm dying
again and again.
There are many ways
to die every day.
Maybe that's why
I'm preoccupied
with death.

Why Dig Up The Past? 12-9-85
People like to think
The past is dead.
No. Its bones
Are stuck in my throat.
I must dig them out,
Give them proper burial.

Magic Grab Bag 11-24-85
Mother, Father, brother,
Teacher, everyone;
Reach into the
Magic Grab Bag--
Pull out a person.
(Never mind their screams.)
Whom do you need?
What do you want me to be?
There's an endless variety,
A person for every whim,
Every need.
If you're not satisfied,
Just wait a little longer;
I'm sure there'll
Be a new one.
All come with a
Thirty day,
Money back guarantee.

My Sister and I 2-16

My sister and I talk in our heads.
It's not safe to talk out loud or for both of us to be seen at the same time.
I'm not supposed to have friends and my mother would kill her.

My Friend, In Peace and Love 12-5

My friend,
I asked if when we both are dead,
My people can be with Your people, your family, In peace and love.
You said yes.
What a gift!
There is no better:
To finally have a place, Be with others who Know us deeply, Accept us deeply-- All in peace and love.

You asked me
Not to go before you.
I will try, I will try
It is such a painful struggle
To try so hard,
So long--
Not for riches or pleasure--
Just to live.
I think that only you
Know how hard it is.

Hearing your struggles
To live, just to live,
I ask the same of you:
Please do not go
Before me.

I know this
Is a fantasy.
I believe when you're dead,
You are dead.
But if the universe is
Kind enough to have
A God or whatever
That will grant us
A peaceful hereafter,
Then I know
I shall also be granted
To be with you
And your family:
"And your people
Shall be my people,"
All in peace and love.

Advance Subscriptions

We have received subscriptions from some of you who have paid for 2 or 3 year-subscriptions to S40S. We would prefer you not do this at the present time. We need the flexibility to change the subscription rate each year to realistically meet expenses based on current production and administrative costs. We appreciate your vote of confidence and long term support of S40S but request you respect our needs in this area.

Canadian Subscribers

When you subscribe, please have your checks made in U.S. Money. Otherwise when it clears your bank, and the exchange rate between U.S. and Canada is taken into account, we actually receive less than \$6.00 in our account. This has complicated our accounting. We are glad to have so many Canadian subscribers but encourage you to take note of this when you encourage others to subscribe or when you renew your subscription.

A note about responding to back issues

Many of you who subscribe and receive back issues are moved to answer the questions that have been asked of readers in those issues. You are welcome to answer those questions but we are unable to print them in the newsletter in current issues due to space constraints.

ISSN #0887-2619

You may have noticed on this issue that S40S has now acquired an ISSN #. Basically this registers the name of our publication "Speaking for Our Selves-S40S" with an international publication registry. It means that no other publication can use our name or logo for a newsletter or similar publication.

Organization Update

Speaking For Our Selves held its Annual Board meeting on March 23, 1986. At this meeting the following individuals were appointed to the board and the following officers were elected:

Rachel A. - President
Linda P. - Vice- President
Cyndi B. - Secretary/Treasurer
Dena L. - Board Member
JoAnne R. - Board Member
Jaimee K. - Board Member

The focus of the meeting was on the organizational development of S4OS and the establishment of policies, development of by-laws and short/long range planning.

Several immediate tasks include the development of a brochure, and of accounting procedures that meet the needs of our growing organization and newsletter.

In addition to the board meeting, a social gathering was held the evening before at the home of the Karsjens (word processing and computer specialists who work on this newsletter). It was a very special evening for board members, paid and volunteer staff, and their spouses, or significant others. To be a part of this project is meaningful for all of us.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

Cyndi B. Biographical Statement

I am 33 years old and the single parent of a pre-adolescent son. I am presently in the process of completing a master's program in nursing. Much of my time is spent on my favorite things, being a mother and working on therapy issues. But in my spare time, I enjoy sewing crafts, cross-stitch, and working on S40S.

Four years ago I went to see a therapist because I was overweight and dissatisfied with myself. After a few weeks the unhappiness turned to extreme depression resulting in confusion, and periods of being catatonic including a nine month hospitalization.

I started experiencing lapses in time and my friends and family saw me go from being intelligent and responsible to being incapable and helpless at times.

After returning home from the hospital, I continued to see a therapist for depression and a dissociative disorder they called ego states. It was easy to assume that the loss of time and memory of parts of my life were due to the depression.

I was treated with anti-depressants, ECT, neuroleptics, anti-psychotic medication for the voices, combinations of MAO and anti-depressants, and psychotherapy.

I returned to school to try to cope by keeping busy while living on disability. While video-taping an interview for a school project, I became "very little and frightened." The instructor encouraged me to go for a consultation with a doctor who specialized in dissociative disorders.

After being diagnosed by this doctor as having MPD, my search began. I went to several experts in and out of the field of MPD. They all came to the same diagnostic conclusion of MPD.

I was devastated and unwilling to accept the diagnosis. It wasn't until I found out that one of my personalities was herself seeing another therapist that I was able to believe that this was really happening to me.

I am now seeing "her" therapist and trying to establish some kind of communication and negotiations with the others inside me. It's not easy. Many times I get so discouraged and want to give up. But somehow I always survive and grow out of those times.

If it weren't for the help of a special neighbor, my son, my friends, and therapist, I'm not sure I would have the courage to fight. It's out of those desperate hours that I realize that no one was there to rescue me as a child, but now I can do my part to make sure there is somewhere for others to turn to.

I have a ways to go in my own therapy. I am just now finding out who the others are and what their needs are. Your letters and writings have offered me encouragement and strength. Together within ourselves and between all of us we will make it.

Clarification about copyright of material sent by multiples to S4OS

We have received three letters from multiples asking for clarification about copyright legalities. The basic thrust of the questions has been:

- Who "owns" the material copyrighted and used in S4OS issues - the author or S4OS?
- Can multiples also submit this same material to other places for publication?
- Who "owns" the material submitted but not used in S4OS issues (this material is kept in our files for potential use in future issues). Does it belong to S4OS or the author?
- Can S4OS use material published in the newsletter in other publications such as special educational issues or published books ?

In order to make an accurate response to these types of questions, we have reviewed the copyright law and have consulted an attorney who specializes in literary concerns.

It was never the intent of S4OS to own material submitted to S4OS. It was actually our understanding that the material used was "owned" by us for the issue it was published in and then the copyright automatically reverted back to the author. We have copyrighted each issue with the copyright office to protect the material from being photocopied/published by anyone for any use.

Our legal advisor provided the following information to us:

1. When S4OS copyrights each issue with the U. S. Library of Congress Copyright Office then S4OS owns the copyright on the material in that issue. Technically, this means that authors whose materials are used would have to get permission from S4OS to re-submit the material elsewhere for publication. It also means that S4OS can use the material in other publications including "special educational issues" or any other publication.
2. There are two ways that S4OS can "return" the copyright back to you, the authors and artists.
 - a. Allow/encourage you to submit this material elsewhere and not invoke our copyright ownership.
 - b. You may request an official transfer of copyright back to you by asking us to file this request with the Copyright Office. However, when we do this, we must identify you by name and address in order to assign the copyright to you. The Copyright Office will not allow us to assign the copyright back to you as a "group," each writer would have to be individually identified. Because of our confidentiality agreement with you, we cannot give out your names and addresses. This individualized plan provides the best protection of confidentiality of identity for our contributors. We will be glad to do

this for all who request it--but won't automatically do it because of the confidentiality issues, time and cost involved.

3. For authors who want to fully protect their rights to their material you may, of course, copyright your material first with the copyright office and then submit it to us. For information about how to do this you may write to: Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20559.
4. For material that you submit and we hold for future issues, you still "own" the material because we haven't published or copyrighted it. (You may always include a stamped, self-addressed envelope and ask for us to return your material.)

Please feel free to write us with additional questions about this copyright issue and we will provide more information in future issues.

We know that this information will be of concern to some of you and will not be relevant to others. We only hope that we have made clear the following policy on this matter:

* It is the intent of S4OS to only invoke our copyright privilege for the issue in which your material is published. Although S4OS legally holds the copyright to your published material, future use of your material will take place only with individual permission from each author.

After it has been published in S4OS, the author is free to submit it elsewhere for publication and we will not challenge the submission. S4OS will honor the request of any author for transfer of copyright of his or her materials. Transferring of copyright will be done at the author's expense.

PUBLISHING NAMES OF NON-MULTIPLES

At the present time it is the editorial policy of S4OS not to publish the names of therapists or health/mental health professionals in this newsletter. If multiples include the name of their therapist or discuss health professionals by name in their submissions, we automatically edit out the name and substitute an initial or initials. Therapists who submit questions or any material that we use are not listed by name or initials. The only way we publish the full names of non-multiples is in our appreciation column including the thank you to donors. Even in this case, we do not publish the name if the individual requests to be anonymous. (Donors who are multiples are recognized by first name or initials only; their last names are not listed.)

Would you believe that my therapist has actually given me homework to write to you? She brought back a copy of your newsletter for me from a special conference in Chicago last fall. Since then, she has encouraged me to write to you about certain issues in my therapy. I've procrastinated for months now because I have sincerely felt that I had no legitimate reason to be writing. The problem is this -- every psychiatric professional that I have been referred to in the last year all say that I am a multiple personality. Up until this, I had respected them quite highly, however, it must be a grave mistake on their part.

Whenever we discuss my diagnosis and my feelings about it, my therapist comically rolls her eyes up and says I am in my denial again. I just do not feel that I am a multiple. I wholeheartedly agree that there is something wrong but not THAT! What a horrible thought! What I am is "spacey," you know, not quite with the program. I admit that I lose very brief periods of time such as, "My, how the time flies when you're having fun!" I run across people I don't remember but lots of people have trouble remembering names and faces. There are a few rare instances that I have been shocked that unaccounted time went by but that was under extreme stress and I think any normal person would do that. I've forgotten details of conversations but that's because I'm spacey! But even though I have simple explanations for all of this, the doctors say that these are the very symptoms that a multiple would have.

What they are calling symptoms, I call "normal." After all, I feel too normal. What does it feel like to be a multiple? I don't hear voices; I don't find strange belongings that I cannot account for; I don't find myself suddenly in a strange city and not remember how I got there. That's what the literature says it is like to be a multiple. I've read the books, seen the movies, but I'm not like that at all.

But here's the catch. My therapist says, "What about all those other people that I've met within you?" I think I have been brain washed into believing that I'm a multiple so I subconsciously start acting like one. I don't know why I do, but in the past few months I can see myself acting like I'm different people. I even make up names to call myself as I go! Now, that's a mentally sick person. Would you believe that I can act like a six-month old baby; drooling and all. Then I'm this person called the Indian Princess: a Potawatamee Indian at that. How sick can you act? Then I have boys, not one or two, but five! How ridiculous! I just cannot believe that intelligent professionals actually think these are separate personalities. I think I've missed and should have been an actress. My therapist says that she has already met about thirty parts of me this past year and when I've been in one of my lying, pretending or whatever states, (maybe psychotic state would describe it best) I have said that I have over fifty different personalities. Can you believe that? I don't.

What does it feel like to be a multiple? Sometimes I feel as if reality is fading away and I'm about to faint. There are many times that I say the opposite of what I really want to, as if I have no control over what my body is doing. I do have flashbacks but I just cannot remember nor understand what they are about. I've always had trouble keeping friends. I always feel so lonely; I feel as if I am a disappointment and disgrace to my family; I feel as if there is something I'm missing in life; I feel as if there is a core of evil deep inside of me. Is this normal, or is this what it feels like to be a multiple? Naw, and it doesn't matter what the professionals think; we don't think we're a multiple.

Sincerely yours,
Eliza, Betty, Beth Ann, et al. (Edit Level C)

DISCOVERING MY MULTIPLES, MY THERAPIST AND COURAGE -- Essay of "Discovery"

I am a women in my late 20's. Employed with an aerospace firm based in California. And I am also a person suffering from a personality disorder.

After my divorce from six years of marriage, the loss of my daughter through the proceeding custody battle, I entered a hospital's Psych Unit for an eating disorder (Bulimia) and depression. There I was assigned to a psychiatrist and thus was the beginning of my therapy.

Almost three years have elapsed. It was not until the late part of 1985 that I was diagnosed as having MPD.

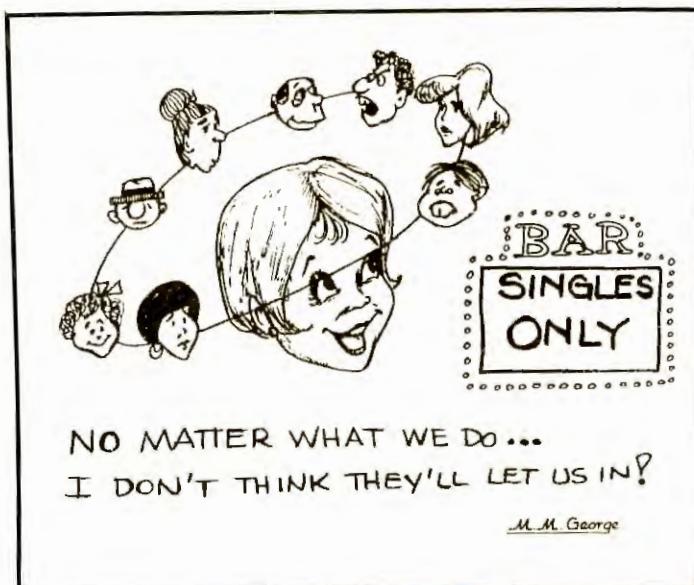
Throughout my course of treatment, which has included several hospitalizations (the last one occurring a year ago from a severe overdose), my recovery towards wholeness has been and still is extremely difficult. But I have managed to maintain a job and cultivate my career in the engineering support for prototype design with my company.

As I look back over these past few years, what I have found to have been so helpful in getting me this far, was the respect and trust shown to me by my psychiatrist. Equally important were the steps taken towards making each one of my selves trust and realize their freedom to experience open expression of their feelings and thoughts without fear of ridicule and criticisms by openly changing. To be whoever that has the need of talking about what they have yet to understand. To release their pain as they come to realize how very important each one was for our survival in coping with years of abuse. Some of their ways need modifying and some are no longer necessary. This is the point I am at in my therapy, facing the evaluation of all my selves and allowing them to learn of each other--unite their abilities (those beneficial for all as well for that individual) for the functioning and well-being of the whole--this body that we share and live our lives through.

Cafe De' Aeir (Edit level B)

Editor's Introduction

These three drawings and the poem were all submitted by a new subscriber. Thank you, M.M.George, for your creative work! It really captures different aspects of being a multiple.

**THE LONELY FIGURE** by M.M. George (Edit level A)

A feeling like unto none before
Came swirling over me
As I sat and listened
Quite intently
To the soft waves of the sea.

My mind began to wander
As I sat upon a dock
My mind envisioned
A lonely figure
In the water on a rock.

The lonely figure sat so forlorn
I saw her sadly cry
Alone on the sea
It soon struck me
That lonely one was I.

(Editor's note: This poem was written before this individual knew she was a multiple.)

(Question from a therapist responsible for developing a special inpatient psychiatric unit for multiples - to be answered by multiples)

HOW SHOULD THIS IN PATIENT UNIT BE DESIGNED? SPACE NEEDS? TYPES OF GROUPS TO BE OFFERED? TYPES OF TREATMENT TO BE OFFERED? WHAT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL TO MULTIPLES RECEIVING SHORT OR LONG TERM TREATMENT ON THIS UNIT?

Victoria G. (Edit level C)

I have noticed one big difference in hospitals is the staff and if they believe I am a multiple. I can sense a disbeliever a mile away.

I usually do better if I have a private room, unless there is someone who is similar to me. I mean not psychotic and around my age. I feel group therapy is a good idea, yet not mandatory. There are days it's not a good idea for everyone involved.

I have found Art therapy, Psychodrama, Movement therapy, Music therapy and O.T. very helpful to me and everyone else, yet it depends greatly on the staff involved. I also found 1-to-1 Art therapy a valuable tool. Psychodrama also helped a great deal. As much individual attention as I could get helped a great deal too. I was talking to another multiple and she told me that some of her younger ones had (and still have) play therapy. I think this should also be included.

I have found talking about being a multiple has helped a lot, also a group on incest, rape or lectures on these two subjects and reading my chart daily helped me.

I believe both long and short term hospitalizations are useful. The only insurance I have is Medicare and public aid. I know it would be better for all of us to be in a long term inpatient unit.

One other thing I thought of that helps is not having rigid rules, such as bedtimes, telephone times, T.V. times, etc. Once leaving the hospital, it helps to be able to call the staff from time to time. Also at H. the social worker calls to see how we are doing. It reinforces the fact that there are people who care.

P.D. & Co. (Edit level C)

This is a collaboration of ideas which came out of needs each has experienced.

Design - Space indoors and outdoors as well. Many alters like walking or jogging for exercise, others like nature and others would prefer to live indoors forever. Also, a small garden to work in.

Gym - A room that contains a punching bag, walls that balls can be bounced off of, possibly, types of workout equipment, mats for exercise classes - these are very useful for defusing intense anger or frustration. A gym room could also be used for self-defense classes, as many of us feel unsafe due to early abuse, learning how to defend our adult selves from attack would help with the feelings of being unsafe. (I realize I'm throwing in possible classes/groups ideas in this section, but they go together.)

Sound proof padded rooms - We have been hospitalized many times since our diagnosis was made, and many times it would have helped some so much to be able to scream. However, there was never a sound proof room to do that in, so we weren't able to due to others (inside) inhibitions about being heard by patients on the unit and upsetting someone.

Recliner chairs - In any room where hypnosis may be done.

A childrens room - Designed specifically for the children within, this could be invaluable. I think a fairly large room would be best with soft furniture, carpeting and perhaps one end of the room painted with rainbow and flowers or other non-threatening things (however you should not use animals in wall paintings as some abuses occurred with them.) Other items could include: pillows, blankets, storybooks, coloring books and crayons, childrens therapy books i.e. books that address death, losses, emotions, etc., anatomically correct dolls to aid children alters to discuss abuse incidents, puppets, toys, dolls and games.

This room could be used for one-on-one therapy or child alters group therapy or play sessions, or just somewhere for the young ones to go when they are out and need to be in a comfortable environment. This kind of room could help the scared ones or non-communicative ones so much to break through the fear. Of all our ideas, we see the most potential coming from a room like this.

Music therapy - This could involve having various instruments available for alters to discover (or rediscover) talents in this area, the use of song books, with and without words, to bring certain emotions to the surface- helpful since many emotions are locked away separately within different personalities.

Art therapy - Usually referred to as occupational therapy - to have available every form of art media to work with: oil, acrylic, watercolor paints, canvases, paper, drawing pencils, drawing and sketching pads, clay, fingerpaints, pastels, felt-tip markers, crayons, construction paper, magazines for collages on specific topics, yarn & essentials for crocheting and knitting, sewing materials, woodworking projects, leather projects and crafts in general.

The main thing is to have items like paint and crayons or drawing paper on hand and available at all times. Art therapy groups could focus on specific topics to help people express their feelings in ways other than words (or destructive behaviors). One-on-one art therapy using whatever medium that would be most helpful, could be used with a particular personality who is in crisis or working through a difficult memory or conflict. Encouragement by staff given to all alters to express themselves in some creative art form can help one alter understand another better when looking at each others work. And as in music, some MP's will discover talents they did not know they possessed. This can lead to self-esteem.

Beth Ann, Mary Beth, Bess and Eliza (Edit level C)

- Try to avoid the "locked unit" look - this only upsets my children personalities that were created for being locked up.

- If at all possible, do not use locked leather restraints or straight jackets; please place in a quiet room or medicate first. Such restraints only duplicate similar child abuse scenes where the child was also restrained, "for her own good".

- As far as therapy, individual and then groups for multiples worked best for me. There is probably at least one artistic personality in a multiple, so art therapy seems logical. Other therapies to help different personalities might include play therapy for some of the nonverbal children.

- Make room for the children and please do not humiliate a multiple for having them. I was seen rocking a teddy bear and my intern publicly announced it in the lounge and the fact that I was acting immature even though she knew my diagnosis. She immediately had the bear taken away by my family. The bear belongs to a fourteen month old. Have toys available for the children and my therapist suggests play rooms for different age groups. If invited, the children are more likely to present themselves for the therapist to meet and work with. My children readily learned that the hospital and staff was not a safe place for them to be and have difficulty in trusting professionals.

- Help the multiple stay oriented to time and place, ergo, have the date visible (we never had a calendar on the ward I was on). Help the patient keep in touch with current events.
- Have literature in layman's language about multiples for family and friends and make an effort to educate them.
- Take care to protect the privacy of the patient; such a diagnosis gets sensationalized among inexperienced therapists and doctors; limit access of videos and charts to only those in direct care of the patient (a "professional" at the hospital I was in had supposedly let the secret out about my hospitalization to a former employer).
- Please do not assign an inexperienced intern or medical student to a multiple as their primary physician. My own experience was catastrophic because of my intern's fear of me, her total lack of experience in therapy to start with, let alone with multiples. One example is that she refused to believe that it was possible for me to be in pain from an injury one moment and not the next; therefore my requests for Tylenol for headaches or when I pulled a leg muscle went ignored. She even refused to let me have anything for a fractured foot until a day later and then I was only to get it that day. I have no history of substance abuse.
- And please educate the staff to the disorder. Hearing remarks such as, "You do too remember!" and "You're only acting this way for attention!" works against a multiple in believing in the diagnosis and increases already deeply imbedded feelings of guilt and self hatred probably common in most multiples. I'm still trying to overcome the belief that I am totally responsible for my illness because that was how the staff seemed to treat me.

Ann H. (Edit level B)

I have made enormous efforts to stay out of a hospital because:

(1) I have enough problems trusting one person, my therapist, let alone a large number of ever changing staff, all with different values, etc.

(2) I don't want other people to have control over my body, what I wear and all the small details of daily life.

(3) I have more freedom to get mad and throw things or whatever than in most hospitals. I have more freedom to show my symptoms, not be totally compliant and work things out if I need to.

(4) I don't want people lying to me and saying that I have to do this or that "for my own good" when it's really for the staff's convenience

(5) I've acquired a more sophisticated knowledge about what works for me than I think most staff people will use. For example, I find people "interpreting" my behavior when they hardly know me to be very insulting; if all it took was superficial insight, I would've done it years ago for myself and not had all of these problems.

(6) It seems the purpose of most hospitals is to get people to be more compliant, rather than to heal them.

There are many times I'd rather have had a place to go and heal. I would still like to know that it would be possible, if needed, to have:

- A place where people are always available to talk to.
- Toys, dolls, furnishings for the children - make them really welcome.
- People who respect what various personalities want to be called.
- Most important: A staff who believes that this is real and who aren't afraid to relate, to give!
- Adequate staff support so that they can give.
- As much privacy and confidentiality as possible. No groups of trainees herded through to see the "zoo". If someone wants to learn how to do this work, let them do some sort of internship, say 3 months minimum.
- Ways the patient can have as much control as possible over what happens to them.
- Art, music, poetry, dance therapy and alternate ways for the various people to express/help themselves.
- A philosophy of healing as being the goal, very carefully thought out. I recommend reading any of Bruno Bettelheim's books on his Orthogenic School.

SURVEY OF SUBSCRIBERS

Thank you to all subscribers who answered the questionnaire in the last issue. Especially thank you to those who write personal notes of encouragement and support to me, the editor. I am sorry I can't individually write you but I do want you to know that your concern for me is appreciated. I have read and re-read your letters many times. I have been slow to respond to your offers for help because the last few months have been very difficult for me. I have been hospitalized twice and the personal struggles have limited my capacity to respond.

A total of 31 individuals have responded to the survey. Of these 21 live out of the State of California, 3 are in California (but not local) and 7 are local (in the Los Angeles and Orange County area).

The people who are local and able to come and directly help with this newsletter's administrative and editorial tasks have been the people that I have called first. Thanks to the following people who are now volunteering on a regular basis: Barbara, Bette, Sheeley, and Cyndi.

As time goes along, I will be in contact with others of you to assist with more diverse tasks that can be done from a distance.

Thank you all for your support and understanding.

FUNDING SOURCES WANTED!!!!!!

Speaking For Our Selves is searching for funding sources that could provide staff salaries, and funding for educational projects. It will not be possible to indefinitely continue this work on a volunteer basis. The task needs ongoing staff and funding. So . . . if any of you know of possible funding source or people who would know of such sources . . . public, private, etc., please let us know.

Thank you--in advance for your assistance.

GRANTWRITERS WANTED

If any readers have skills at grantwriting and want to assist us in writing grants to provide ongoing funding for S4OS, please let us know. We will be writing grants during the summer between the June and September issues. This invitation is extended to both MPD's and non-MPD's.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A psychiatrist who treats multiples suggested that the following books for survivors of incest and child abuse may be of interest to S4OS readers. The Editor of S4OS has read both of the books suggested and concurs that they may be helpful.

Bass, Ellen and Louise Thornton (Eds.) *I NEVER TOLD ANYONE: Writings by Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*. New York, Harper and Row, 1983

Gil, Ilana, Ph.D. *OUTGROWING THE PAIN: A Book for and about Adults Abused as Children* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, Launch Press, P.O. Box 40174, CA 94104, 1984

DREAMS THAT DIE IN THE NIGHT by Vera (Edit level A)

I was a little stonechild, mummified: my eyes, unblinking marbles in my head. The childlegs that were mine had turned to ice and would not walk. Some violence had petrified me and, I fear, had spread throughout.

In the gleaming belly of a silver-gray bird, I was flown to my first death. The sun collapsed before my marble eyes, stars sparkled but they were nothing to write home about. Time slowed down, dissolved. The bird somehow landed on solid ground.

Two old people took me to their home. Once there, the man held me in his lap while the lady made me wondrous things to eat. In later months, when I had thawed, they took me to the seashore and the zoo. Our lives became as one: They owned my arms and legs, my heart. Teeth fell from my mouth and then, again, they grew.

The years went by and I dreamed nightly of that silver-gray bird. I dreamed of the family that I had left behind, living like genies in a magic black box. I rubbed that magic Aladdin's lamp and voices came and then they disappeared.

At last it was time to leave. The old people cried when we said our good-byes -- I kissed their sad red mouths and they kissed mine. My heart broke to leave them, but I was resigned: the genies had ordered that it was time. Days later, we reached the house that I had left behind.

Soon it was winter, then spring. In the summer, hollyhocks bordered the yard of the house, the house in which I finally grew. I went to school. Some years passed, my mind stood still, I rarely laughed. I wondered, always, where I was, and who. There were no answers, no one knew. Of course, I never asked.

REFLECTIONS FROM A READER

One of the things I noticed in your newsletters is a struggle that we have been through ourselves. That is how hard it is for the 'core personality' to accept being a multiple, and then how difficult it is for the other alters to try to accept the one who is trying to reject them.

I am a core personality. In some ways, I accepted the other alters immediately. The first alter my therapist identified was a child, and I have loved her from the beginning more than I could ever love myself. I still denied the multiplicity and the memories the alters shared with our therapist for nearly a year.

When I was little, and Mother would go crazy, I would tell myself 'This can't be happening!' Then I would 'wake up' the next morning, and it hadn't happened. Not to me; another alter had taken it.

I am part of my community who denied. Because I denied, I kept hold of the feeling that life should be better, that people shouldn't hurt me, that I shouldn't hurt so bad.

Many other alters think I am a wimp. Whenever I heard this, I used to curl up in a ball and whimper (I can't cry). I have come to accept it. I am a wimp. I was able to give in without a struggle. I couldn't struggle. I spent my life trying to placate the whole world. I was (and to a certain extent still am) afraid of the whole world, though I had no idea why.

When we split, I lost my courage, my defiance. Other alters kept it for me, hidden in other forms. It was probably safer that way; I hope it saved the community some abuse. Whether or not it did, I truly feel that the splitting saved our sanity.

My denial, both of the multiplicity and of the abuse, are part of who I am, and I really can't help it. It has also served a definite function in the community. It allowed me to love Mother back when someone had to, and it allowed me to look for help.

So I just want to try to tell others, who are trying to deny, to go along with what feels like play-acting, if you aren't hurting anyone, and, if you can, buy the doll or the dress or whatever that someone inside you wants.

And to those alters who are fed up with the denial, who are sick of this alter who is frightened of her own shadow while she is trying to get rid of those of you who have helped her survive, try to have patience, and remember, she can't kick you out. There's no door.

By Missy (Edit level B)

I have been integrated for almost a year now. But it has not been easy. Since my integration, I've had to deal with my mother's death (just 2 months after my integration), my brother's jail sentence (48 hours after my mother's funeral), and three close friends died through the Christmas holidays. But as hard and trying as it was, I made it. Now don't get me wrong; you'll always have problems, but letting yourselves come together will only better yourselves in the long run. I know I have a long way to go, but I've come one hell of a long way too. I can remember never letting anyone get close to me. I still do it at times. But my self-esteem has come up a lot. And I am finally starting to feel like AJA's worthy to be loved. And I don't feel guilty as much. Like I said, I have a long way to go but I also came a long way too.

Friends at S4OS, please feel free to write any or all of me letters. Until our next newsletter, so long.

LA (Editing level C)

Today I actually remember feeling pain, depression, suicidal thoughts and even anger. These feelings used to belong only to other parts of me. Christine held the depression, paranoia, and suicidal thoughts, while anger was attributed only to Sophia. I carried on with my secretarial work while in these states. Before this another part of me would take control and not know how to do the work. It is frightening and painful to actually experience and feel these feelings as myself. It must be growing pains. Normally, when Christine was out and suicidal, Sophia would take full control in her role of protection and usher Christine out. Who am I now? I know not. It all seems so strange to me, coming together slowly but surely. Integration. Together. Help.

New Chris (Edit Level C)

Joke Column Submitted by MEK (Edit level B)

1. One MPD to another MPD patient: "Do you know, we are probably the only human beings, in the world, that can be sitting in a room all by ourself and be able to carry on a group therapy session!"
2. A friend asked an MPD patient out to a movie one evening. When the MPD accepted, the friend replied, "I hope this doesn't mean I have to buy 44 tickets does it?" The MPD replied, "No, but what a date? Who else do you know, that you could ask out to a movie and pay for only one ticket and get the company of 44 people!"
3. Two MPD patients (who had over 50 personalities between them) were sharing a room, on a psychiatric unit, in a hospital and one said to the other, "You know, we could always complain about the over-crowded conditions in this room."

EDITOR'S REFLECTIONS

Dear S40S Subscribers,

Hooray! Another issue, more of you volunteering with this venture, many more subscribers, and more growth for all of us.

I have struggled with writing this column. Initially, I developed two versions of this column, one an "official editor's" reflection column and the other a personal note about my own growth/changes in the last few weeks with notes by others inside me expressing different viewpoints, thoughts, and feelings. I have chosen to share the more personal version despite the fact that it is very difficult for me to share at that level.

I want to share with you something that I am struggling to tell myself. But maybe if I also share it with you I can learn it better for me. The message is--to be open to get to know all parts of yourself and to accept them into your life. I have really been struggling with this at an intense level for weeks including 2 1/2 weeks on a locked psychiatric unit. At one point in the recent hospitalization I felt so angry about being a multiple, so furious that I had to allow "others" time to express feelings/thoughts that were unacceptable to me, so upset that they had any claim on my time and my life. I fought against it!!!

But as I slowly calmed down and really listened to what the "others" inside me had to say and what they had to offer my life in terms of coping/understanding, I began to accept them. And with that acceptance came more peace and safety than I have had in years And now the many of us inside are learning to "time share." Learning to respect and give each other space and time in my life.

It is painfully hard for me to go through these changes. I like to "do it myself" . . . I like to be "in charge" . . . but I am finding that only by sharing living/feeling/knowing with the others inside me can I really handle the trauma of my past and present life.

Rachel

Dear S4OS subscribers,

Rachel thinks of herself as being the core personality like a planet with the rest of us personalities circling around her like satellites. But the reality, from my perspective, is that she has only been "Rachel" for 14 years. Before that we were here handling our life. She doesn't want us back. She is scared of us because we "hear voices" and because we have memories and feelings that scare her. But we have returned to help her handle the feelings and to transition from being "in charge" to being the member of a team. This is hard on her. But she needs us. And we need her. Slowly we are learning.

Carol(s) . . . and the voices

Dear S4OS subscribers,

We girls are glad that the Carol(s) have finally returned to help with things. We can't handle adult things very good. We have helped with many things but now we need help for us. With more of the different ones here helping it is better for us. It is hard on Rachel to learn to "time share" with everyone. But she is learning with the help of her friends, family, and Doctor.

The girls . . . lots of girls

Dear S40S subscribers,

We don't care much about this newsletter. Mostly we care about our body getting well. We are sick a lot. We need a lot of help. The doctor in the hospital was nice to us. It is too scary for us to write more right now.

from the body that got hurt a lot.

Dear S4OS subscribers,

We don't have much to say either. We just met the therapist last week. He said he would help us very slowly so we don't get scared and he said we don't have to remember much right away. It is too awful to try to remember about going places and how we got there. We know a lot about travel outside of us and about travel between the different ones inside of us. This newsletter is a good idea.

from the ones who travel (walking, cars, trains, buses, etc.)

Dear S4OS subscribers,

I am THE LITTLE GIRL inside Rachel. She is always ignoring me because my feelings don't agree with hers. Recently she has been more caring of me--letting me do drawings, and play with my stuffed animals. I wish i were dead a lot of the time. I hope the new therapist Rachel is seeing can help me but i doubt it.

----- the little girl -----

Appreciation Column

Special thanks to the following individuals who have contributed to the secretarial/administrative and editorial tasks for publishing this June 1986 issue:

Multiples--Barbara P., Cyndi B., Janet B.

Non-multiples-- Shelly Beckett, Bette Mulally, Jenny Cashman

Thanks you to Roy Azarnoff (Organizational Consultant) for assisting us with the paperwork and technical assistance in submitting our application for our Federal Non Profit Status.

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Michael H. White--Legal issues related to listing self-help groups

Michael S. Klein--Legal issues related to copyright law

Special thanks also to Jim and Marian Karsjens for donated technical consultation and training on more sophisticated uses of our word processing/mailmerge program!!!

To Financial Friends of S4OS

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Kinko's: For reduced rate for copying

Multiples: Beverly M., A.R., Jaimee K., L.E., Peggy W., Danna, K.L.P., K.W., and two who request to be anonymous.

Non-Multiples: Gary S. Dean, Inc., Greg L. Goodrich, Ph.D., Herbert Allen, M.D.

SEPTEMBER 1986 ISSUE

This issue will focus on a special theme:

THE CHILDREN INSIDE US AND THE CHILDREN IN OUR LIVES

For this issue we encourage you to encourage the children personalities in you to send us their writings, poetry, drawings, cartoons, etc. Or the adult parts of you may write about the children parts of you and ways that you have struggled with knowing them, helping them, accepting them, and integrating them.

We also extend a special invitation to the children in your lives--your children, the children of relatives or friends who are close to you--to write/draw about their experiences of having a multiple for a parent, relative or friend.

All of the questions to be answered for this issue will focus around the theme of children. We at S4OS look forward to receiving your responses and publishing this special September 1986 on the children inside us and the children in our lives.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY MULTIPLES (from other multiples)

- Please only answer one or two from this group -

1. What are the ways of helping the child selves ?

2. If there were sexual abuse experiences with your parents, do the children personalities feel their "performance" was a poor/disappointing one to your parents?

For multiples who are parents

3. How do you cope with parenthood?

4. How has being a multiple affected your children: before diagnosis, during treatment, and after integration?

For multiples who are not parents

5. How does being a multiple affect your decision-making process about having children?

QUESTION TO CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS, RELATIVES, OR FRIENDS ARE MULTIPLES (from the S4OS staff)

1. What is it like for you to have a parent, friend, or relative who has multiple personalities? How do you think this has influenced your life?

QUESTION FOR MULTIPLES (from a therapist)

1. As a young child, in what ways did you try to tell or show (directly or indirectly) adults, teachers, doctors, or other helpers that something was wrong in your life? or that you had multiple personalities?

MAIL YOUR MATERIAL AND RESPONSES TO S4OS BY AUGUST 1, 1986.

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S4OS



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